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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 001000

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [HR](#) [CH](#) [LE](#) [KPAL](#) [SU](#) [RS](#) [GG](#) [SP](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN'S VIEWS IN ADVANCE OF MARCH 16 FOREIGN AFFAIRS MEETING

REF: A. STATE 39909

[B](#). MADRID 987

[C](#). MADRID 988

[D](#). MADRID 992

Classified By: Political Officer Ricardo Zuniga for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY. Poloff discussed the China arms embargo, Croatia, Human Rights in Belarus and Cuba, the Middle East Peace Process, Hamas, Lebanon, Sudan, Moldova, and Georgia with the MFA's Head of EU Policy Planning Enrique Mora Benavente on March 10 and March 14. Spain's position regarding lifting the China arms embargo remains unchanged in favor of the EU decision to lift the embargo. Most EU states believe Croatia has not met all required conditions to enter EU accession talks. Spain will likely support the U.S. on human rights resolutions concerning Belarus and Cuba. The March 1 London meeting concerning Palestine was a success. The GOS does not support designating Hizballah as a terrorist organization. The GOS will not support removing Hamas from the terrorist list any time soon, but they acknowledge that the EU and Spain will have to work with Hamas as they become a political force in the democratic process in Palestine. There will be no action on Sudan at the Foreign Ministers meeting on March 16. The EU is ready to cooperate with the new Moldovan government and believes that the elections were generally fair. The EU is currently looking at three proposals for a Border Monitoring Organization (BMO) in Georgia. END SUMMARY

//CHINA ARMS EMBARGO//

[2](#). (C) Spain's position regarding lifting the China arms embargo remains unchanged. Mora Benavente hoped that the current trip to the U.S., Japan, and Australia of the delegation led by Annalisa Gianella, High Representative Solana's Special Representative for Nonproliferation Issues, would help explain the European position regarding the China arms embargo. Representatives of the six European arms manufacturing nations that signed the 1998 Letter of Intent (Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Spain) are accompanying Gianella on the trip. Spain's representative will be Marcos Rodriguez Cantero, the Deputy Director General for Disarmament at the MFA. Mora Benavente said that the delegation is aware that they will not change minds in the U.S., but he hopes that members of Congress and other USG members will understand better how the code of Conduct and the "toolbox" of measures to exchange information on weapons sales will help regulate arms sales (Ref A).

//CROATIA//

[3](#). (C) Most EU states believe that Croatia has not met all required conditions to enter EU accession talks. Mora Benavente said that there is a 90 percent chance that there will be some sort of statement March 16 that will address the postponement of EU accession talks for Croatia.

//HUMAN RIGHTS//

[4](#). (C) Mora Benavente said he was not an expert on the UN Commission on Human Rights, but he thinks that Spain will continue to support the co-tabling and the lobbying of human rights resolutions concerning Belarus. Mora Benavente did not have specific information on the resolution regarding Cuba, but he did note that the Cuban Foreign Minister would be visiting Spain this week. (NOTE: Spain has always supported U.S. resolutions regarding Belarus. Post is polling GOS sources separately on the issue of the Cuba resolution.)

//MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS//

[5](#). (C) The March 1 London meeting concerning Palestine was a success in Spain's view, and EU representatives had a good discussion with Lieutenant General Ward. The meeting was a success in that: (1) the Palestinians received pressure from the international community to maintain security in their territory, and (2) the Palestinians received support from the international community to continue reform efforts.

//HAMAS//

[6](#). (C) Mora Benavente told Poloff that Hamas would not be

removed from the terrorist finance list any time soon, but he said that EU member states may be obliged to work with Hamas in the future when they start winning local municipal elections. The EU and Spain have many development projects in Palestine, including several "sister city" relationships. Additionally, he added that because Hamas is the second largest political party in Palestine, the peace process would better be served if Hamas is pushed towards being more political and democratic and away from violence.
//LEBANON / HIZBALLAH//

17. (C) The GOS supports full implementation of UNSCR 1559 forcing Syrian troops to leave Lebanon, but Spain's position remains the same on opposing Hizballah's designation as a terrorist organization. Mora Benavente explained to Poloff that there are three elements to Spain's current policy towards Hizballah: (1) Spain would like to see hard evidence of Hizballah's support of terrorist activities in Palestine; (2) Spain does not want to upset the current Middle East Peace Process by designating Hizballah as a terrorist organization if the Palestinians under Abu Mazen do not support such a designation; and (3) Hizballah is a key player in the Lebanese political process and alienating Hizballah will alienate 40 percent of Lebanon's population (Ref C).

//SUDAN//

18. (C) Mora Benavente said that there would be no new actions on Sudan at the February 16 GAERC meeting. The EU is asking that the Commission of Inquiry conclusions be dealt with by the International Criminal Court. He said that he expects an omnibus UNSC resolution concerning Sudan in April.

//RUSSIA / MOLDOVA//

19. (C) The EU supports the preliminary conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission in Moldova that states the elections were generally fair, although the EU regrets the fact that opposition candidates did not have equal access to the media. The EU is ready to cooperate with the forces entering Parliament and will continue to push for the development of democracy and modernization in Moldova. The EU will also push for new negotiations on the status of Transnistria.

//RUSSIA / GEORGIA//

10. (C) Mora Benavente told Poloff that the EU is currently considering three options for a Border Monitoring Organization (BMO) in Georgia, including: (1) Reinforcing the office of the EU Special Representative to the South Caucasus Heikki Talvitie; (2) Training Georgian officials to patrol the border; and (3) Having an EU mission at the border that would be a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) mission. He said that there was widespread consensus in the EU for the first two options, but there was no consensus on the third option. He said that the Baltic States, Slovakia, and Sweden were all pushing the third option, but he said the proposal did not have strong support among other EU members. Mora Benavente told Poloff that the international community now has a six-week window to try to resolve the Georgian BMO problem because poor weather in the mountainous border region will prevent action during that time (Ref D).

MANZANARES